

REVELATION

“Apokalupsis” – an uncovering, a laying bare, making naked

The book of Revelation uncovers or unveils through symbols, signs, imagery, and visions the impending persecution facing the church. It seeks to prepare the people for persecution by the revelation which God gave to Jesus Christ to show to His servants. This apocalyptic method prevents the enemies of God from understanding the message, while making it known to His people.

(Revelation, An Introduction & Commentary by Homer Hailey)

Apocalyptic writing is **predictive** and designed to bring **comfort** to those facing an impending trial

The Old Testament contains 3 apocalyptic books:

- Daniel
- Ezekiel
- Zechariah

**The New Testament
contains ONE
apocalyptic book -
REVELATION**

All Three Of These Books Deal With Trials Leading Up To Christ

I, John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience *which are* in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. 1:9)

AUTHOR: The apostle John

DATE:
64-68 AD **OR** 91-96 AD
(we'll deal with this in detail later)

RECIPIENTS:
The 7 churches of Asia
(Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea)



IMPORTANT!!!!



When trying to understand the book of Revelation, we need to remember a few things:

1. The book was **obviously** understood by the people it was written to.
2. It was written in language they could understand.
3. It was written using symbols they could understand.
4. It was written to be useful to them (that doesn't mean it isn't useful for us, but it was definitely useful to them).

THE IDEALIST VIEWPOINT

(The Philosophy Of History view)

- ▶ Initially presented by Origen (185 -254 AD)
- ▶ No ties to specific historical events
- ▶ “Revelation is a theological poem presenting the ageless struggle between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. It is a philosophy of history wherein Christian forces are continuously meeting and conquering the demonic forces of evil.” – Robert Mounce

PROS:

- No need to harmonize with specific historical events
- Applicable for all ages and relevant for all periods of church history

CONS:

- John says the events are “shortly to come to pass” (Rev 1:1)
- Absolutely no way for first-century Christians to understand the book.
- It leaves interpretations at the whim of culture and social views of whatever time period the readers are in.

The Futurist View (The Pre-Millennial View)

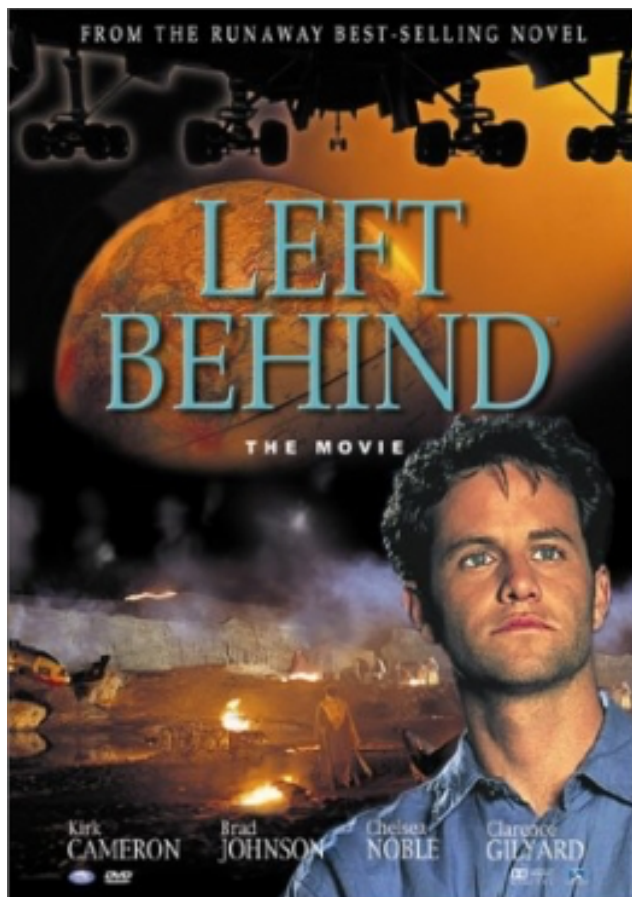
- ▶ The book reveals the events that will happen just before Jesus' return
- ▶ Teaches that Jesus will establish a "Millennial Kingdom" followed by a short-lived attack by Satan and his followers.
- ▶ The Futurist view takes a literal or semi-literal approach to Revelation.
- ▶ Most popularly seen through the Tim LaHaye **Left Behind** series.

PROS:

- Brings great encouragement to those expecting the end soon
- Viewed by some to be easier to understand because most of the language can be viewed literally using the futurist view.

CONS:

- John says the events are "shortly to come to pass" (Rev 1:1)
- Where is the "blessing" for the first-century readers (Rev 1:3)?
- How could you know when you are in the period just before Christ's return?
- John specifically says the writing isn't literal (Rev 1:1).

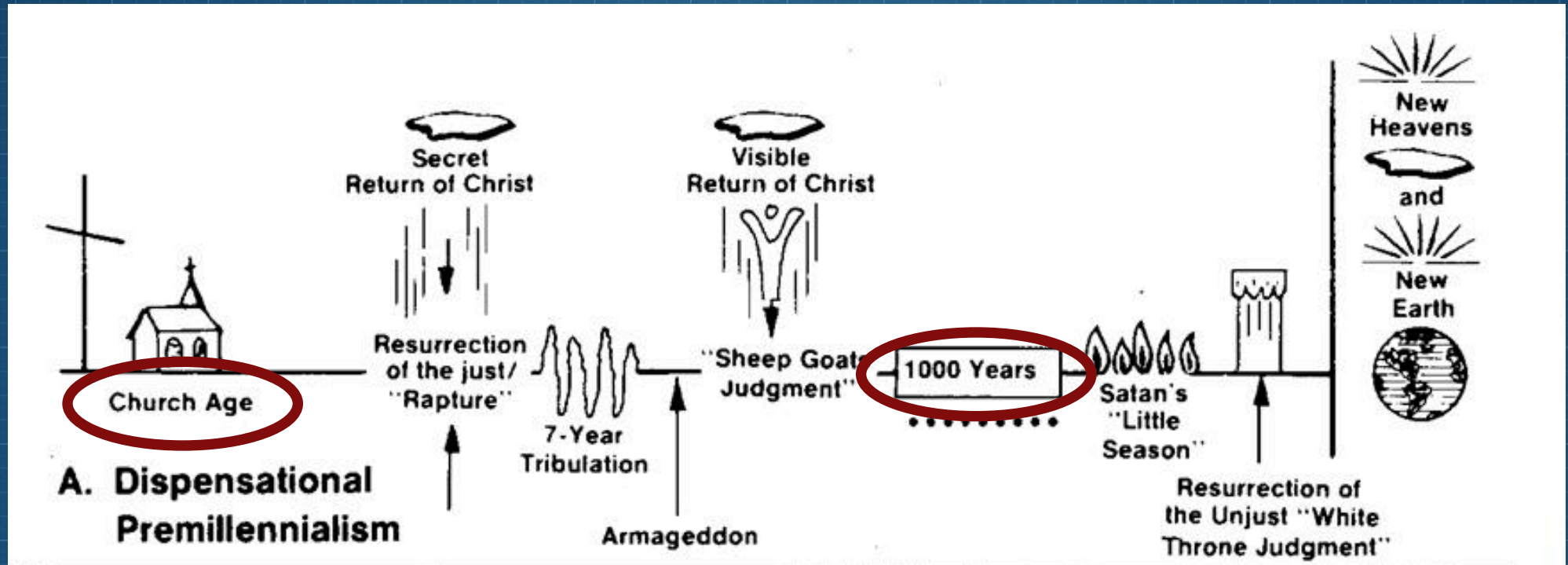


TIM LAHAYE
JERRY B. JENKINS

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHORS

et this mind be
subsisting in the form of God,
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g a bondman's form, taking
; and having been found in f
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of [the] cross.

Dispensational Pre-Millennialism



The dispensationalist divides the history of mankind into **seven distinct periods** or dispensations, and teaches that God deals with the human race during each period according to a different principle: innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace, kingdom. Also, this view insists that the Church will be removed from the earth before the great tribulation. This latter view, espoused by John N. Darby in England about 1830, and disseminated widely in this country by the Scofield Reference Bible, is really the unique phenomenon called American Premillennialism. It is not taught in the Bible but in the Scofield Reference Bible.

The Continuous History View

- ▶ The book reveals the events that will happen from John's day until the end of time.
- ▶ This view was made popular during the Reformation movement in the 1500's
- ▶ Continuous History sees within Revelation all the events of Western history – Catholic church, Reformation, formation of America, Hitler, etc.

PROS:

- A sense of excitement of seeing modern history within the ancient pages.
- Would work as a great predictor for future events and cataclysms.

CONS:

- John says the events are “shortly to come to pass” (Rev 1:1)
- How could you possibly understand the book in the first-century?
- Creates a very speculative and uncertain system for interpreting the book.
- Culture dictates the interpretation.